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**CONTACT:**

**SOS Press Office**

**(916) 653-6575**

## **Governor Newsom Signs Legislation to Fortify California's November 3, 2020 General Election for the COVID-19 Pandemic**

**SACRAMENTO, CA** - Governor Gavin Newsom has signed AB 860—authored by Assemblymember Marc Berman with Senator Tom Umberg as a joint author—which codifies that county elections officials must mail a ballot to every registered, active voter ahead of the November 3, 2020 General Election.

“California is moving in a swift, bipartisan manner to fortify our democracy in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic,” Secretary of State Alex Padilla said. “Expanding vote-by-mail statewide is a necessity to protect our right to vote and our public health. Voting by mail has worked safely and securely in California for decades. Mailing every voter a ballot for this election is simply common sense.”

“A few simple measures in AB 860 will further strengthen and complement the expansion of vote-by-mail. Providing vote-by-mail tracking options to all California voters will improve voter confidence. Allowing lawfully cast vote-by-mail ballots to arrive to elections officials 17 days following the election will protect against any disruptions in the postal service. And affording elections officials more time to process vote-by-mail ballots will help with the efficiency of the vote count process for this unprecedented election.”

"I want to thank Governor Newsom for signing AB 860 as soon as it reached his desk," said Assemblymember Marc Berman, Chair of the Assembly Elections and Redistricting Committee. "Californians will start voting in just over 100 days. In the midst of a deadly health pandemic, mailing a ballot to every California voter, and giving them the opportunity to vote from the safety of their own home, is the responsible thing to do. No Californian should have to risk their health – and possibly their life – to exercise their constitutional right to vote."

AB 860 provisions for the November 3, 2020 General Election:

- Requires county elections officials to mail every active registered voter a ballot.
- Requires every county elections officials to adopt a vote-by-mail ballot tracking system. Californians can sign up for the Secretary of State’s “Where’s My Ballot?” tool to receive

automatic updates about the status of their vote-by-mail ballot by text (SMS), voice call, or email. Californians can sign-up at [wheresmyballot.sos.ca.gov](https://wheresmyballot.sos.ca.gov).

- Requires that county elections officials process and count ballots that were postmarked on or before Election Day and arrive to elections officials no later than 17 days after Election Day. Under current law, vote-by-mail ballots that arrive more than three days after the election are not counted.
- Allows county elections officials to begin processing returned vote-by-mail ballots 29 days before Election Day. Under current law, counties can begin processing vote-by-mail ballots 10 business days before an election. Results will still not be released until after all polls close on Election Night.

